A LETTER

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

FRANCIS FULFORD, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF MONTREAL AND METROPOLITAN.

BY ADAM CROOKS.

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TORONTO, September 1st, 1862.

MY LORD BISHOP,

Other avocations prevented my noticing earlier the statements which appear in the *third* letter, a short time since issued by you to your Bishops and Clergy, and publicly circulated.

These, as well as all your Lordship's statements in connection with General Evans' proposition about the Sherbrook-street Church, carry with them their own refutation, and any further notice of them would be quite unnecessary, if they had not emanated from a person who occupies the high position in the Church of England of Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Montreal and Metropolitan.

That position necessarily carries with it a large amount of influence, both social, with the clergy, and in the community at large.—The mere fact that a charge has come from your Lordship would almost *prima facie* support its correctness. No one who is affected by such a charge, can possibly treat it with the silent contempt it would have merited, and would have received so far as the General's family is concerned, if it had originated from a less influential source.

But if because your Lordship is the author of the charge, and the arraigner and accuser before the bar of public opinion, of General Evans and Archdeacon Hellmuth, in their joint conspiracy to entrap you, it is necessary not to pass over such a charge in silence, but to offer a complete vindication: and if such a vindication is considered complete and satisfactory by the public: your Lordship's position before the community will be the more humiliating, as the necessity was the greater for entering upon such a vindication.

I am conscious, however, that while I attempt this, and will secure the judgment of every unprejudiced person, who may trouble himself to understand the questions that have been raised, it will be impossible to entirely overcome the influence of your position in the Church; and I may possibly be subjected to similar letters of the coarse and ungentlemanly character of those which have fallen from some clergymen in their attempts to assist your Lordship, in your contest with Archdeacon Hellmuth.

In my letter of the 17th of May last, I took occasion to remonstrate

against the personal attack made by you upon General Evans, in you Pastoral of the 28th of April, 1862, addressed to your Bishops and Clergy, and which, in a note appended to it, was announced for sale for five cents, at the bookseller's shop in Montreal.

In that Pastoral, you characterized the liberal proposition of General Evans, for the building of a Church on Sherbrook-street in Montreal, as a "manœuvre," "a project for the benefit of General Evans' land"—that "you found the whole business was an attempt to take you in."

As soon as I read these statements, and learned from Mrs. Crooks, (who had heard of the whole matter at the time from her father,) the true nature of the proposition that was made you, I at once addressed you on the subject. In my letter I stated, I trust in sufficiently plain language, the essential terms of the offer that was made you, and which, in themselves, *per se*, were utterly irreconcilable with the discreditable inference drawn by your Lordship, and, on the contrary, demanded commendation, instead of condemnation and injurious epithets from your Lordship. I expressed my belief, that carried away by animosity to the Archdeacon, you had not considered the disgraceful reflection you were casting upon an aged and distinguished General officer, and I left your Lordship a *locus pœnitentiæ*, or an opportunity of making the *amende*, which could not otherwise have been becoming to a gentleman, and one occupying the position of Primate of the Church of England and Ireland in Canada. I took care not to interfere in the least with so much of your Pastoral as concerned the Archdeacon of Huron, while at the same time I felt confident that one of his long tried services in the cause of the Church, would convincingly and triumphantly clear himself of all of your accusations; and that he would emerge out of the fiery ordeal to which your Lordship had subjected him with a character untarnished. In this confident hope I have not been disappointed; and the verdict rendered on all sides, both in England and America, has shown how groundless were your charges against the Archdeacon.

In replying to my letter of the 17th of May, your Lordship did me the honour to acknowledge it, and to say, that it was natural and reasonable for me to be deeply interested in whatever affected General Evans in any way—that you had no hesitation in saying, that you exceedingly regretted if anything said by you in your letter had given pain to me, or any of those connected with him; you stated that you

had no intention or wish to apply the words quoted by me to the General, and only introduced his name as being necessary to explain the nature of the application to you; at the same time, however, you "most distinctly denied the correctness of my version of the matter," and expressed your readiness at all times to maintain the facts as stated by you.

My disposition is such, that I shrink from obtruding myself unnecessarily upon the public, and it was only from a sense of duty that I undertook to publicly resent the charges so publicly made by your Lordship. I felt that however puerile these were in themselves, yet your Lordship's position gave a semblance of weight to them, which intrinsically they did not possess. I was quite willing, therefore, to let the matter rest where it had been placed; and the more so, as many churchmen who differ in their theology from Archdeacon Hellmuth, and apparently coincide with your views, expressed their regret that your Lordship should have made so grave a mistake, as upon your mere suspicions, and after the lapse of so many years, to have branded a General Officer and a Dignitary of the Church with the imputation of attempting to take you in, in connection with a transaction which, by your own statement, was quite free from so unwarrantable an inference.

I felt, besides, that it was highly detrimental to the interests of your Church, which ought to do so much for our common Protestant cause in this country, that further prominence should be given to this unhappy error of your Lordship.

I had some hope that after Dr. Hellmuth, in a courteous and christian-like spirit, had explained the scope of his remarks before an assembly of Evangelical Clergymen at Islington, and that he never intended any attack, much less violent attacks, as your Lordship terms them in your letter to me, upon the Canadian Church and Canadian Institutions, your Lordship would have allowed the subject to have dropped, and, perhaps, even expressed some satisfaction with those explanations.

Your Lordship has not thought fit to adopt this course, and I regret to say, that the *animus*, or *odium*, if I may be pardoned the expression, which prompted the issue of your first Pastoral, seems not to have been the least abated. We find it running through a second Pastoral issued by your Lordship; and in the third, recently issued, it even becomes stronger. In connection with this proposal about

building the Church, in this third letter we are favoured with such expressions as these:—"*a total misrepresentation of the facts in the Archdeacon's first letter, which, however, he has still further overdone in his second.*" "*There is not one word of truth in the statement*" of General Evans about the two interviews, evening and morning, on the subject of the Church, and, that these circumstances are "*an entire invention.*"

Behind the backs—(this is the only expression applicable, and I must therefore use it)—of the General and Dr. Hellmuth, we find your Lordship using the following defamatory language to the Bishop of Huron:—

He, (your Lordship,) then proceeded to state the circumstances concerning the offer which General Evans had made to him through Dr. Hellmuth, of a site for a Church in Montreal, and of £3,000 to build it; and he concluded by saying, that *he had seen through the trap which was thus laid for him, and discovered that General Evans and Dr. Hellmuth had* CONSPIRED *to obtain from him his consent to a measure which was only intended to enhance the value of General Evans' property, and to obtain a Church in the city for his son-in-law; but which would, in the end, prove highly injurious to the Church.*

I am also given to understand that your Lordship continues to make this a topic of conversation in Montreal, with comments injurious to the fair names of the parties concerned in it.

General Evans and his family are not prepared to submit to the usurped authority of your Lordship, in thus stigmatizing, from your Metropolitan Throne, the action of a private individual, which was alike creditable to his liberality, and, if accepted, of benefit to the Protestant community of Montreal.

Major Evans, of the 16th Regiment, in June last, wrote to your Lordship, requesting you to deny the imputation as publicly as your Lordship had made it, and that otherwise proper steps would be taken to preserve his father's character from being injured by your attack. To that letter you vouchsafed no reply.

I am therefore directed by the General, and all the members of his family from whom we have heard, to demand from your Lordship an unequivocal and absolute withdrawal of the charge and injurious statements we complain of. If you should decline to give this, then if your Lordship occupies the position of a defendant in an action for

defamation, that will be imputable to your Lordship alone, and to no one else.

Lest such a demand should be thought unreasonable, I will point out what appears to me some satisfactory reasons for requiring it, and they are the following:—

I. The introduction of General Evans' name could only have been justified by the necessity of the thing; and this involves, firstly, the necessity of writing the Pastoral against Archdeacon Hellmuth at all, and secondly, the necessity of referring to this Church affair as a justification for such a course. As to the first, you say in your letter to me, that "The Archdeacon's violent attacks upon the Canadian Church and Canadian Institutions, rendered your interference necessary." Now that this point has been cleared up by three Pastorals from your Lordship, and three replies from the Archdeacon, it is manifest that Dr. Hellmuth made no attack upon the Canadian Church and Canadian Institutions—that your Lordship, with a view manifestly to prejudice Dr. Hellmuth in the estimation of the Clergy and Churchmen of the Province, tortured his remarks at Islington into a sweeping attack of this kind, instead of accepting his explanations of their purport: that his remarks had reference to Trinity College, and to Evangelical men *as such;* that Dr. Hellmuth's previous labours on behalf of Lennoxville and Sabreovis Colleges would necessarily show that he could only have referred to the one Institution of Trinity College, which, by the way, is more properly a Church Institution than a Canadian one, as this term is only strictly applicable to the Provincial University; that you understood the sense in which Dr. Hellmuth used the term *Evangelical;* that, if there were any doubt, you had Dr. Hellmuth's explanation to this effect in his reply to *Presbyter*, to which he referred you; that notwithstanding the non-necessity therefore of any interference on your part, you did interfere, and, I am afraid, your warmest friend cannot say successfully.

As to the second point. The necessity of introducing this Church proposition at all into the discussion, seems also against your Lordship. Dr. Hellmuth testifies, as he avows, to two or possibly to three facts, viz.: That the teaching of Trinity College was dangerous from its Tractarianism, or "unsafe approximation to Rome;" that Evangelical men, as such, were few, and were not generally encouraged; and, lastly, (which was, perhaps, the true cause of your

Lordship's fulminations,) that attempts were being made in Canada to rear up a Hierarchical structure, which, in his opinion, would be highly injurious to the Church. To show that his testimony on these points is not reliable, you would throw discredit on the character of the witness. But before resorting to so questionable and generally so unsuccessful a step, and which, when the character and standing of another clergyman holding a high office in another diocese is concerned—should not have been entered upon without grave consideration—it is to be expected, nay, it is demanded from your Lordship, that your Lordship would first have been prepared to have asserted the contrary, and to have denied the truth of those statements before beginning to impugn the personal character of the witness to them. Instead of this, however, we find your Lordship substantially admits that Dr. Hellmuth's statements as to Evangelical men is correct,—that you are not in a condition to pronounce upon the Trinity College controversy; and, thirdly, the creation of a Metropolitan is necessarily going far in the erection of a hierarchical structure, if it is not to be considered the topmost stone thereof; and that such is likely to be injurious to the Church cannot but be the opinion of many, without the additional light derived from this present controversy.

No justification is, therefore, to be found for your Lordship's course, based upon any alleged necessity.

II. There is nothing in the story as told by your Lordship yourself. Before any story is to be credited, one has to make proper allowances for the circumstances under which it is first given to the public. To weigh it properly (if such precision may be excused), we are to consider:

1. The person narrating it, and how affected towards the person to whose prejudice it is narrated.
2. The person so sought to be prejudiced.
3. The object sought by the narration of it.
4. The mode or manner of the narration.
5. The narration itself.
6. When narrated for the first time.
7. Conduct inconsistent with the belief of the narrator himself.

The narrator of the present story is your Lordship; and, therefore, as I have said, *prima facie*, there may be some credibility about it; but we find that, before your elevation to the Episcopate,

you looked upon the person whom you seek to affect as a rival, and rushed to the Colonial Secretary (forgetful for the moment of the *nolo episcopari*) to ascertain the truth of the rumor of his appointment to the See of Montreal; and that, from almost the time of your advent to this country to the present, Dr. Hellmuth has found no favor in your eyes. You are, therefore, manifestly prejudiced, and your statements are to be received with great caution.

Your story would affect General Evans and Archdeacon Hellmuth equally. If you will refer to *Hart's Army List*, you will find a short statement of General Evans' long services, and that he is now within less than twenty of being the oldest General Officer in the service. Dr. Hellmuth, as you are well aware, has been distinguished since he entered Lennoxville College for unceasing devotion and labors in the cause of your Church; that the Bishop of Quebec, with whom he formally co-operated, bears unequivocal testimony to this; that he has occupied various responsible positions in the Church, and that recently he has been selected by the Bishop of Huron as one of his Archdeacons and as his Commissary to England. *Prima facie*, then, no one, I may properly infer, would believe any story which could impute a discreditable action to either General Evans or Dr. Hellmuth, much more that both should unite in it.

The object you seek to accomplish is to damage the character of one person, at least, against whom you are prejudiced, and hence we cannot expect much caution or charitableness, but, on the contrary, exaggerated and highly-coloured statements that the object may not fail to be attained. The statements, again, are not plain and straightforward, but abound in insinuations, and therefore the more difficult to fasten upon the narrator the charge of falsity.

The proposition that caused such unfavourable impressions upon your Lordship—as your Lordship actually states it—was an exceedingly liberal one, and beneficial to the Church at least; I am not sufficiently enlightened to see that it was otherwise; but injurious or not injurious to the Church, your Lordship admits that it was Dr. Hellmuth himself who informed your Lordship of the whole proposition, and *that before* you pronounced your decision. Whether there was *haste* or not in the transaction, that is immaterial, as no advantage was intended or taken by the parties, as your Lordship's own version of the affair allows me to infer.

Your Lordship first tells this story to the Bishop of Huron with

the evident design of shaking the confidence of the Bishop in his Archdeacon, behind his back, (as you were in hopes you had done it with the Bishop of Quebec by similar means.) The taking advantage of such an opportunity was quite unfair, and entirely opposed to all gentlemanly feeling. I speak plainly. Your Lordship fails with the Bishop of Huron—the poison cannot be distilled into his ear; and, feeling no doubt that, upon Dr. Hellmuth's return to this country you would be called to a proper account, you anticipate it, and issue your first Pastoral, as it appears clear to me to obtain some justification for these slanders to the Bishop of Huron, and to escape from them, and not for the ostensible reasons put forth by your Lordship, of taking the Archdeacon to task for his so-called attacks on the Church. The prominence you have given to this Church episode is an additional reason for drawing such an inference. If you believed this story, or gave much weight to it, I would have naturally looked to some earlier publication o it, and then the Bishops of Quebec and Huron, and the Colonial and Continental Church Society would not have been placed in the false position of honoring the clergyman whom you now defame to them. But your Lordship's conduct is inconsistent with such a belief; for when it was in your power to have refused to be a party in honoring and appointing Dr. Hellmuth to different responsible offices in connection with the Church, we find you on several occasions joining in this, and on one expressing yourself "*that it was with much pleasure.*"

III. There is no variance between your Lordship's statement of the proposition as made to you by General Evans, or your understanding of it, and that stated by General Evans and Dr. Hellmuth. After your positive assertion in your letter of the 21st May last to me, in which you say "I beg most distinctly to deny the correctness of your version of the matter," I was certainly not prepared to find that your Lordship's letter would result in placing all the different statements as to the nature of the proposition made in perfect accord, and that the only point now open is whether you had an *evening* as well as a *morning* interview with General Evans on the subject. Whether there were two or more interviews, or only one, it can make no material difference. Did you not understand the proposition made before you were called upon for a decision, and did not the parties making it inform you of it? If so, what matters it

how many interviews took place upon the subject. However, if it is necessary to determine that point, there are three witnesses, and I will venture to call them *credible*, and I may mention another, Mr. Charles Ogden, against your Lordship's memory, more or less retentive, and a diary more or less accurate.

IV. Your Lordship has been the aggressor in this personal contest, and you have clearly failed to substantiate your charge.

The charge complained of is so gross that your Lordship has given occasion to the editor of a New York Church newspaper "to blush for his Anglo-Saxon relations," and to an English Church paper "to ascribe such personalities as your Lordship has indulged in to the backwood's character of Canada."

It is an Englishman, and not one educated in the country, who has given rise to these taunts, and, having been subjected to such, "Canadian Institutions," can scarcely thank your Lordship for your interference.

For these reasons, which I have as briefly as possible stated, I require, on General Evans' behalf, the unequivocal withdrawal of all of your Lordship's charges against him, and that you will desist from any reiteration of them.

I have the honour to be,
Your obedient Servant,
ADAM CROOKS.

To the Right Reverend
FRANCIS FULFORD, D. D.,
Lord Bishop of Montreal and Metropolitan.